

FBI Laboratory Practices for Processing a Single Unit Submission (SUS)

1 Purpose

These practices establish the requirements for receiving evidence, processing a request for examination, and returning evidence for submissions in which examinations are to be conducted by a single unit.

2 Scope

These practices apply to FBI Laboratory personnel who receive, examine, and return evidence submitted to the FBI Laboratory for examination by a single unit. Single Unit Submissions (SUS) will be designated based on the type of evidence submitted and/or that they will be examined by a single unit.

The following items will be handled as SUS by the designated units:

Unit	Evidence Items
Chemistry Unit	Fire debris/ignitable liquid items Paint Toxicological samples including blood, hair, urine, and bodily fluid samples Metallurgical materials
DNA Casework Unit or Scientific and Biometric Analysis Unit - DNA	Swabs Known samples and toothbrushes submitted as alternate knowns Tissue samples from remains
Explosives Unit - Huntsville	Soil samples Explosives swabs and samples
Explosives Unit - Quantico	Explosives-related chemistry items
Firearms/Toolmarks Unit	Expendable bullets and cartridge cases
Latent Print Operations Unit	Drug packaging Known fingerprint cards Lifts
Operational Projects Unit	Film Disposable cameras Photographs Slides Negatives

Questioned Documents Unit	Footwear and tire casts/lifts Known tires or tire test impressions Known footwear test impressions Known questioned document samples Shredded documents
Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit - Latents	Known fingerprint cards Lifts
Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit – Toolmark Group	Casts
Trace Evidence Unit	Geological samples Known hair and fiber samples

In addition to the above items, Compact Discs, DVDs, nonoriginal evidence, evidence received electronically and request only submissions will be assigned to the appropriate unit as a SUS.

Any submissions containing materials defined as hazardous by the Department of Transportation (DOT) must be returned by personnel who have been trained to ship packages containing hazardous materials by a certified DOT or International Air Transport Association-approved school. DOT defines hazardous materials as materials that in shipment pose risk to health, safety, and property. The materials are classified as being explosive, toxic, flammable, oxidizing, radioactive, or corrosive. Examples of hazardous materials include ammunition, lighters, lithium batteries, pressurized containers, matches, and chlorine.

3 Practices

3.1 Initial Receipt of Evidence

3.1.1 Evidence Management Unit (EMU) personnel may determine if submitted evidence, that is not listed in Section 2, will be handled as a SUS based on the criteria that only one unit has and/or will examine the evidence.

3.1.1.1 The submitted evidence will be handled as a SUS as described in this document from the time that it is designated as a SUS.

3.1.2 EMU personnel will create a submission in Forensic Advantage (FA) as described in the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM) - Practices for Processing a Submission and Evidence Breakdown. Physical evidence may be stored temporarily in evidence receiving areas until the assignment occurs.

3.1.3 EMU personnel will create a Case Record in FA for the assigned unit. In lieu of an *Examination Plan* (7-262), the assignment of the Case Record will serve as the record of the review of examinations.

3.1.4 The Unit Chief of the assigned unit will ensure the SUS is assigned to the unit and a person to manage the case at the submission level, and an examiner is assigned to Case Record level in FA.

3.1.5 If a lead was created in Sentinel by an FBI contributor, it will be forwarded to the assigned unit by EMU personnel.

3.1.6 If the evidence receipt has not been acknowledged, the person managing the case will ensure acknowledgement occurs as described in LOM - Practices for Assigning Cases and Conducting Examinations. At the discretion of the person managing the case, the acknowledgement may cover multiple submissions.

3.2 Request Only Submissions and Submissions of Evidence Received Electronically

3.2.1 When evidence is received electronically (e.g., email attachments, evidence serialized in Sentinel by FBI contributors and retrieved by Laboratory personnel for examination) or a request only submission is received by a person who is not appropriately trained to receive evidence, they will contact an appropriately trained person to initiate a submission in FA.

3.2.2 Request only submissions will be created in FA using the Request evidence type.

3.2.3 Evidence submissions received electronically will be created in FA using the Item Evidence type.

3.2.4 Request only submissions and evidence received electronically will be directly forwarded to the appropriate unit. The evidence will be received on the FA New Submissions grid prior to starting examinations.

3.2.5 If multiple types of evidence are submitted electronically for separate units under a single request, a Case Record will be assigned to each of the requested units. Each examiner will function as the person managing the case for their assigned Case Record.

3.3 Evidence Breakdown

3.3.1 A person in the assigned unit will breakdown the evidence as described in the LOM - Practices for Processing a Submission and Evidence Breakdown. Personnel breaking down the evidence will record what evidence was received and the condition in which it was received (e.g., check-in notes).

3.3.1.1 If a firearm is assigned as a SUS and there are no indications the item has been rendered safe (e.g., green zip tie affixed to a visible part of the weapon), the person breaking down the evidence will consult with an appropriately trained person to render the firearm safe before handling.

3.3.1.2 If the person breaking down the evidence determines that the submission should be handled as a Multiple Unit Submission (MUS), the person will determine a logical stopping point and will consult with EMU personnel for possible reassignment.

3.4 Examination Process

3.4.1 An examiner will review the information for each case and determine the necessary examinations. An *Examination Plan* is not required.

3.4.2 Examinations will be conducted as described in the LOM - Practices for Assigning Cases and Conducting Examinations.

3.5 Laboratory Report or Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products

3.5.1 The *Laboratory Report* (7-1 LIMS) will be formatted as described in the LOM - Practices for Preparing, Reviewing and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records in Forensic Advantage (FA) and an i3 product will be formatted as described in the LOM - Practices for Providing Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products. The examiner does not need to additionally state that they may be contacted regarding the status of the submission.

3.5.2 The Description of Evidence section will include a full list of all evidence submitted within the submission(s).

3.6 Change of Request From a SUS to a MUS

3.6.1 If it is determined that the evidence submitted does not meet the definition of a SUS as listed in section 2, the change of request will be recorded in the Case Communication Log in FA and the submission will be reassigned to EMU personnel to manage the submission.

3.6.2 The EMU person managing the case will create an *Examination Plan* and follow the LOM - Practices for Assigning Cases and Conducting Examinations to process the request.

3.7 Change of Request From a MUS to a SUS

3.7.1 When evidence has been sent to a unit as a MUS and unit personnel would like to request that the status be changed to a SUS, the person requesting the change from a SUS to a MUS will contact EMU personnel to request the change.

3.7.1.1 The decision to change the status of submitted evidence from MUS to SUS may occur at any time as long as only one unit has and/or will examine the evidence (e.g., contributor decides they only wants one examination).

3.7.2 EMU personnel will determine if the status of the submission should be changed. If so, the change in status and any information that supports the change (e.g., communication with

the contributor, unit personnel) will be recorded by the requestor in the Case Communication Log in FA.

3.8 Evidence Disposition

3.8.1 Evidence will be packaged and returned as described in the LOM - Practices for Shipping and Returning Evidence.

3.8.2 If evidence will be archived (i.e., Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center Evidence Repository), the examiner will ensure that all evidence is properly sealed and accounted for on the Chain-of-Custody Log.

3.9 Retaining Case Records

3.9.1 After evidence has been returned, the examiner will ensure that the Chain-of-Custody Log and other records are complete for the submission.

3.9.1.1 If this is the only submission within the case, or if all other Case Records are closed, the examiner will ensure that the Case and Case Record 1A(s)/1C(s) are generated and retained.

3.9.1.2 If other submissions in the case are still open, the examiner will ensure that the Case Record 1A(s)/1C(s) is generated and retained.

3.9.2 The appropriate records from FA will be serialized in Sentinel and the *Laboratory Report* or i3 product will be issued.

3.9.3 A person from the assigned unit will ensure the lead is covered in Sentinel, if applicable, for evidence submitted by an FBI contributor.

4 Records

The following records may be generated and/or retained in the FBI Laboratory file or Sentinel as a result of these procedures:

- Record of verification of an identification or association.
- Record of a technical review.
- Record of an administrative review.
- *Laboratory Report* or i3 product.
- Request for examination.
- Authorization or request documentation, when necessary.
- Record of the change in status and any information that supports that change between a MUS and a SUS.
- FA Chain of Custody Log.
- Record of the condition in which the evidence was received (e.g., check-in notes).

- FA Case Communication Log, if populated.
- FA Case Record Communication Log, if populated.
- FA Case Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Record Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Communication Log Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Record Communication Log Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Record Report.
- FA Case Report.
- FA Secondary Evidence Log.
- 1A(s)/1C(s), containing administrative and examination records.

5 References

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

ISO/IEC 17025 - General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - Forensic Science Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, April 29, 2019.

ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2012

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
3	06/03/19	Changed evidence management personnel to Evidence Management Unit throughout. Revised table in Section 2 to reflect realignment of Laboratory personnel and removed footnote. In sections 3.1.1, 3.6.2, and 3.7.2 removed requirement for authorization. In section 3.1.1 removed requirement for unit agreement for evidence to be handled as a SUS. Added reference to green zip tie in section 3.3.1.1. Updated title of section 3.8 and added section 3.8.2 to cover archived evidence. Added communication log object repositories to list of records in section 4. Updated list of references in section 5.
4	12/21/20	Gramatical and formatting changes throughout 2 – Added: and/or that they will be examined by a single unit. and/or that they will be examined by a single unit; Updated table 3 – Removed entire section 3.1.3 – Removed: TEDAC Examination Plan (7-274) 3.1.4 – Added: and a person to manage the case at the submission level; Reworded section Added section 3.1.6 3.4.1 – Removed TEDAC Examination Plan 3.5 – Added: or Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products 3.5.1 – Added: and an i3 product will be formatted as described in the LOM - Practices for Providing Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products 3.6.2 – Removed TEDAC Examination Plan 3.7.1 – Replaced person managing the case with person requesting the change from a SUS to a MUS 3.7.2 – Reworded for clarity 3.9.2 – Added: or i3 product 4 – Added: or i3 product 5 – Updated references

Redacted - Signatures on File

Approval

Laboratory Director

Date: 12/18/2020

Quality Manager

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